FIRESIDE SAINTS

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THE
ANGEL · OF · THE · FIRESIDE

FIRESIDE SAINTS

By Douglas Jerrold

With an Introduction by Walter Jerrold, & Illustrated by Charles Robinson.

London
Blackie & Son Ltd. Old Bailey. E.C.
1904

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THIS is the first time that these Fireside Saints *have formed a volume by themselves. They originally appeared in the* Punch Almanack *for* 1857*—the year of their author's death—and, so far as I am aware, have been but twice reprinted since. Once in a volume of Douglas Jerrold's scattered writings published*

in America in 1888, *a volume that took its name from the "Saints" which occupied its earliest pages. The collection was made by a writer who signed his preface "J. E. B., Melrose, July* 24, 1873". *Whom the initials represent, and whether the volume had appeared in England before being published in America, I have not been able to ascertain. The second time that the* Fireside Saints *were reprinted was in* The Handbook of Swindling and Other Papers, *a volume of Douglas Jerrold's miscellanies which I prepared for the "Camelot Series" in* 1891.

The editor of the first-named volume referred to these little thumb-nail sketches as "the sweetest and sunniest of Jerrold's writings"; the author's eldest son and biographer spoke of them thus —"presently come trooping from his pen twelve Fireside Saints *to sit about*

Introductory Note

men's Christmas hearths, in 1857. *They are holy little presences, these, with each her special shining virtue to be imitated. Any home shall be the better for looking at—for studying them. They were their author's last marked success in* Punch—*that is, the last things of his which the public seized upon, and welcomed, acknowledging their author." This is in one slight point a little misleading, as the "Saints" appeared in the* Almanack *for* 1857, *and were therefore present at "men's Christmas hearths" in* 1856. *Each month of the* Almanack *had a "Saint" allotted to it, the legends being set in very small type, in very narrow columns, down the sides of the "cuts". Never assuredly have they made a more pleasantly fitting appearance than here in company with the delightful illustrations with which they have inspired the pencil of Mr. Charles Robinson, one of*

Introductory Note

the most poetically fanciful of the young artists of the present day.

Dainty, fanciful, and quaint, the "Saints" are representative of the least well-known side of Douglas Jerrold's nature, the least well-remembered kind of his writings; he is known as a man of biting, "savage" wit, but not also, as he should be, as a man of intense sympathy and tenderness; as writer he is remembered by such work as Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures *and* Black-Eyed Susan, *but he better deserves to be remembered by such work as* The Chronicles of Clovernook *and* Time Works Wonders. *It is, then, the deeper side of his nature, the more truly individual class of his work that, within their slight limits, these biographies in little represent.*

WALTER JERROLD

Introductory Note

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece—The Angel of the Fireside

JANUARY

Saint Dolly

"Now sleeping, she dreamt that the oven was lighted"

"She felt falling in a shower about her—raisins, currants, almonds, &c."

"The fairies vanished, crying, 'Draw the cake, Dolly—Dolly, draw the cake!'"

"Behold, it was the first twelfth-cake"

FEBRUARY

Saint Patty

MARCH

Saint Norah

Saint Norah praying

"Not proud, but useful"

APRIL

Saint Betsy

MAY

Saint Phillis

"Saint Phillis only wore a red and white rose"

"She still carried the red and white roses in her face"

JUNE

Saint Phoebe

"Saint Phoebe set to work"

Illus-
trations

"Never did the husband touch that mat that it didn't clean his temper with his shoes"

JULY

Saint Sally

"On every birthday added a bead"

AUGUST

Saint Becky

"My dear, take wine, and bless your heart with it"

SEPTEMBER

Saint Lily

OCTOBER

Saint Fanny

"I'd give this ten times over for a supper for my husband"

NOVEMBER

Saint Jenny

"A storm rent their cot in twenty places apart"

Illus-
trations

DECEMBER
Saint Florence
The English Mistletoe
That Eastern Christmas

Illus-
trations

JAN.

Saint
Dolly

SAINT
DOLLY

Saint Dolly

AT an early age, Saint Dolly showed the sweetness of her nature by her tender love for her widowed father: a baker, dwelling at Pie Corner, with a large family of little children. It chanced that, with bad harvests, bread became so dear that, of course, bakers were ruined by high prices. The miller fell upon Dolly's father, and

Saint Dolly

swept the shop with his golden thumb. Not a bed was left for the

baker or his little ones. Saint Dolly slept upon a flour-sack, having prayed that good angels

Saint Dolly

would help her to help her father. Now, sleeping, she dreamt that the

oven was lighted, and she felt falling in a shower about her raisins, currants, almonds, lemon-

Saint Dolly

peel, flour, with heavy drops of brandy. Then in her dreams she saw

the fairies gather up the things that fell, and knead them into a cake. They put the cake into the

for January

Saint Dolly

oven; and, dancing round and round, the fairies vanished, crying: "Draw

the cake, Dolly; Dolly, draw the cake." And Dolly awoke and drew the cake; and, behold, it

for January

Saint Dolly

was the first Twelfth Cake, sugared at the top, and bearing there images of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Now this cake, shown in the window, came to the King's ear; and the King bought the cake, knighted the baker, and married Dolly to his grand falconer, to whom she proved a faithful and loving wife, bearing him a baker's dozen of lovely children.

for January

FEB

Saint
Patty

SAINT
PATTY

Saint Patty

AINT PATTY was an orphan, and dwelt in a cot with a sour old aunt. It chanced, it being bitter cold, that three hunters came and craved for meat and drink. "Pack!" said the sour aunt; "neither meat nor drink have ye here." "Neither meat nor drink," said Patty, "but something better." And she ran and brought some milk, some eggs,

for February

Saint Patty

and some flour, and, beating them up, poured the batter in the pan. Then she took the pan and tossed the cake once; and then a robin alighted at the window, and kept singing these words: "One good turn deserves another". And Patty tossed and tossed the cakes; and the hunters ate their fill and departed. And next day the hunter baron came in state to the cot; and trumpets were blown, and the

for February

heralds cried, "*One good turn deserves another*"; in token whereof Patty became the baron's wife, and pancakes were eaten on Shrove Tuesday ever after.

Saint Patty

MAR

Saint
Norah

SAINT
NORAH

Saint Norah

SAINT NORAH was a poor girl, and came to England to service.

Sweet-tempered and gentle, she seemed to

Saint Norah

love everything she spoke to. And she prayed to Saint Patrick that he

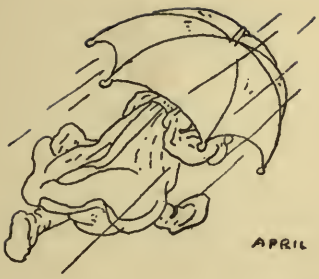
would give her a good gift that would make her not proud but useful: and Saint Patrick, out of his

for March

Saint Norah

own head, taught Saint Norah *how to boil a potato.* A sad thing, and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few.

for March


APRIL

Saint Betsy

SAINT
BETSY

Saint Betsy

AINT BETSY was wedded to a knight who sailed with Raleigh and brought home tobacco; and the knight smoked. But he thought that Saint Betsy, like other fine ladies of the court, would fain that he should smoke out-of-doors, nor taint with 'bacco smoke the tapestry. Whereupon the knight would seek his garden, his orchard, and

for April

Saint Betsy

in any weather smoke *sub Jove*. Now it chanced as the knight smoked, Saint Betsy came to him and said, "My lord, pray ye, come into the house." And the knight went with Saint Betsy, who took him into a newly-cedared room, and said, "I pray, my lord, henceforth smoke here: for is it not a shame that you, who are the foundation and prop of your house, should have no place to put your head into and

for April

smoke?" And Saint Betsy led him to a chair, and with her own fingers filled him a pipe, and from that time the knight sat in the cedar-chamber and smoked his weed.

Saint Betsy

for April

MAY.

Saint Phillis

SAINT
PHILLIS

Saint Phillis

SAINT PHILLIS was a virgin of noble parentage: but withal as simple as

any shepherdess of curds-and-cream. She married

for May

Saint Phillis

a wealthy lord, and had much pin-money. But when other ladies wore

diamonds and pearls, Saint Phillis only wore a red and white rose in her hair. Yet her pin-money brought the best

Saint Phillis

of jewellery in the happy eyes of the poor about her. Saint Phillis was rewarded. She lived until fourscore, and still carried the red and white roses in her face, and left their fragrance in her memory.

for May

JUNE

Saint Phoebe

SAINT
PHOEBE

Saint Phœbe

SAINT PHŒBE was married early to a wilful, but withal a good-

hearted husband. He was a merchant, and

for June

Saint Phœbe

would come home sour and sullen from 'Change. Whereupon, after much pondering, Saint Phœbe

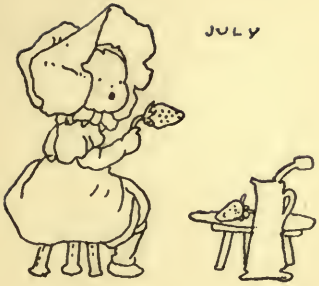
in her patience set to work and, praying the while, made of dyed lamb's-wool a door-mat.

for June

Saint Phœbe

And it chanced from that time, that never did her husband touch that mat, that it didn't clean his temper with his shoes, and he sat down by his Phœbe as mild as the lamb whose wool he had trod upon. Thus gentleness may make miraculous door-mats.

for June


JULY

Saint
Sally

SAINT
SALLY

Saint Sally

AINT SALLY, from her childhood, was known for her innermost love of truth. It was said of her that her heart was in a crystal shrine, and all the world might see it. Now once when other women denied, or strove to hide their age, Saint Sally said, "I am five-and-thirty." Whereupon, next birthday, Saint Sally's husband, at a feast of all

for July

Saint Sally

their friends, gave her a necklace of six-and-thirty opal beads: and on every birthday added a bead,

until the beads mounted to fourscore-and-one. And the beads seemed to act as a charm; for Saint

for July

Saint Sally

Sally, wearing the sum of her age about her neck, age never appeared in her face. Such, in the olden time, was the reward of simplicity and truth.

for July

Saint Becky

SAINT
BECKY

Saint Becky

VERY good man was Saint Becky's husband, but with his heart a little too much in his bottle. Port wine—red port wine—was his delight, and his constant cry was bee's-wing. Now as he sat tipsy in his arbour, a wasp dropt into his glass, and the wasp was swallowed, stinging the man inwardly. Doctors crowded, and with much

for August

Saint Becky

ado the man was saved. Now Saint Becky nursed her husband tenderly to

health, and upbraided him not. But she said these words, and they reformed him: — "My dear, take wine, and

for August

bless your heart with it: but wine in moderation. Else never forget that the bee's-wing of to-day becomes the wasp's-sting of to-morrow."

Saint Becky

for August

SEPT

Saint
Lily

SAINT
LILY

Saint Lily

AINT LILY was the wife of a poor man, who tried to support his family, and the children were many, by writing books. But in those days it was not as easy for a man to find a publisher as to say his Paternoster. Many were the books that were written by the husband of Saint Lily, but to every book Saint Lily gave at least two babes.

for September

Saint Lily

However, blithe as the cricket was the spirit that ruled about the hearth of Saint Lily. And how she helped her helpmate! She smiled sunbeams into his ink-bottle, and turned his goose-pen to the quill of a dove! She made the paper he wrote on as white as her name, and as fragrant as her soul. And when folks wondered how Saint Lily managed so lightly with fortune's troubles, she always answered that

for September

she never heeded them, for—*That troubles were like babies, and only grew the bigger by nursing.*

Saint Lily

for September

OCT

Saint
Fanny

SAINT
FANNY.

Saint Fanny

AINT FANNY was a notable housewife. Her house was a temple of neatness. Kings might have dined upon her staircase! Now her great delight was to provide all things comfortable for her husband, a hard-working merchant much abroad, but loving his home. Now one night he returned, tired and hungry, and by some mischance there was

for October

Saint Fanny

nothing for supper. Shops were shut, and great was the grief of Saint Fanny. Taking off

a bracelet of seed pearl, she said: "I'd give this ten times over for a supper for my husband."

for October

Saint Fanny

And every pearl straightway became an oyster; and Saint Fanny opened, and the husband ate, and lo! in every oyster was a pearl as big as a hazel nut, and so was Saint Fanny made rich for life.

for October

NOV.

Saint Jenny

SAINT
JENNY

Saint Jenny

AINT JENNY was wedded to a very poor man; they had scarcely bread to keep them; but Jenny was of so sweet a temper that even want bore a bright face, and Jenny always smiled. In the worst seasons Jenny would spare crumbs for the birds, and sugar for the bees. Now it so happened that one autumn storm rent their cot in

Saint Jenny

twenty places apart; when behold between the joists from the basement to the roof there

was nothing but honeycomb and honey. A little fortune for Saint Jenny and her husband

for November

in honey. Now some said it was the bees, but more declared it was the sweet temper of Saint Jenny that had filled the poor man's house with honey.

Saint Jenny

DEC.

Saint
Florence

SAINT
FLORENCE

Saint Florence

SAINT FLORENCE, by her works, had her lips blessed with comforting, and her hands touched with healing. And she crossed the sea, and built hospitals, and solaced and restored. And so long as English mistletoe gathers beneath it truthful hearts and English holly brightens happy eyes, so long will Englishmen, at home or abroad,

for December

Saint Florence

on land or on the wave, so long—in the memory

of that Eastern Christmas will they cry:—"God

for December

bless Saint Florence! *Saint*
Bless Saint Nightingale!" *Florence*

for
December

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